

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2013  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
ROOM 208  
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

**Members Present:** Councilman Todd Berch  
Councilman Gerald Daley  
Councilwoman Linda Salafia

**Staff Present:** William Russo, Public Works Director

Councilman Todd Berch opened the Public Works Commission Meeting at 7:10 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated September 11, 2013. Chair Berch motioned to approve minutes as amended. Motion was seconded and approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT-** None

**CORRESPONDENCE-**

- a. South Fire District – Memorial Garden Thank You Letter – Director Russo stated that he wanted the commission to see the thank you letter from South Fire Department and recognize the assistance with the construction and dedication that city yard gave to them for the Memorial Garden ceremony.
- b. Old Mill Road – 2001 Road Bond Incomplete – Director Russo wanted the commission to take a moment to read the letter dated back to 2002 from Sal Fazzino to James Russo. Director Russo had the city engineers give him a brief outline on what is going on with the road bond. They informed him that about they thought Water & Sewer was going to do C.S.O. work over there, which would have been to reconstruct the road. The project was designed by Cardinal Engineering. Director Russo doesn't think that Water and Sewer Department had the money to complete the work. In 2005 an overlay to Old Mill Road was completed just to get through to the C.S.O. project. An overlay lasts for about 5-10 years; we're now at the 11 year mark. 1 million dollars will be put in with the Road Bond to reconstruct Old Mill Road from Washington Street to Westfield Street. This will consist of new catch basins, curbing, and drainage. He was told that they are going to look for the money next November and that will be the reconstruction. Director Russo stated that he will put a letter out to James Russo.

Councilman Berch brought to Director Russo's attention that any utility work that needs to be completed in Veteran's Park will get done before the C.S.O. work. Water for the Veteran's Park will come in off of Fisher Road and go behind the pool. Any updates to Yankee Gas will be the utilities and electric that are needed for the underground work. The draft for the Veteran's Memorial Park Renovation Committee is complete. The final meeting will be held on October 16, 2013 with recommendations that will be read to the council with mandates with regards on how to proceed.

Director Russo stated that he will draft a letter to James Russo and let him know that the commission has discussed the road bond project and he will give him an outline of what the engineers have outlined towards it.

Councilman Berch made a motion to accept the correspondence. Motion was seconded and approved.

#### **NEW BUSINESS-**

- a. CNR Request – Director Russo stated that the new mower is an “over the rail” mower. Bacher Corporation is the company that is used to purchase because the mower head fits the “under the rail” mower. This mower is one that has an arm to enable cutting behind guardrails. Director Russo stated that the Fleet Manager brought the mower to his attention that it is beyond its repairing stages. It is still being repaired continuously so grass can be cut. The money is in last year’s CNR. The council will have to approve the setting up of line items. Councilman Berch motioned for approval. Linda Salafia seconded the motion, and motion was approved unanimously.
- b. Mailbox Damage Policy – Director Russo stated that Claims Administrator, Mark Langton, brought it to his attention that other towns are eliminating the repair of mailboxes when the damage is caused by flying snow or slush from a passing plow. Mailboxes should only have to be replaced if a plow knocks them down. The ordinance states that a standard post and box is all that is required for mailbox replacement. It costs roughly around \$6,000.00 every three years to replace damaged mailboxes. Councilman Berch motioned for rejection for the mailbox damage policy. Meeting was then continued with lack of a motion due to difference in opinions among the commission.

#### **OLD BUSINESS-**

Director Russo asks the commission to take a minute and read a memo in which the Mayor and Joe Samolis had already been briefed on. The tree down at the south green needs to be re-done with the Christmas lighting. The previous lighting was damaged due to wild animals in the area and major snow storms. The lights cannot be up all year long. On the tag attached to the lights, it is instructed not to leave them on the tree for more than ninety days and that they are intended for temporary use only.

The new cost will be \$25,000.00 for the first year and \$22,500.00 for the year after that. It will then go down to \$20,000.00 per year for the next five years. This will end up totaling around \$100,000.00 every five years. Last year, it cost \$13,000.00 for labor alone, outside of what the cost was for the lights themselves. The money that was spent last year was not any more than what will be spent moving forward.

Director Russo stated he went to the tree site last Monday, and arranged for an electrician to put up the lights and meet there to turn the tree on. Dean Lisitano, Chief Building Official and previous electrician, Pat Hutton, Claudia DeFrance, Joe Samolis, and Brian Young have all been active volunteers towards the tree lighting.

The vendor in which the city is using has a lot of experience with Christmas Décor. The man who will be completing the service name is Don. He is located out of Deep River, Connecticut and is currently in charge of the tree in the Ivoryton Center and the tree at Yale. They are responsible for taking the lights

off of the tree after the Christmas season is over with, and making sure the lights are all functioning properly. The vendor feels that 6,000 bulbs will be needed to fully light the 70 foot tree and make it stand out.

As a money saving alternative, it was suggested that flood lights shine at the tree while having the tree decorated for Christmas with shiny decorations.

Director Russo stated that he went online to search for Vendors to decorate the gazebo. The closest vendor for Christmas décor was out of Glastonbury. The contact person's name is Kim whom was brought down to take a look at the gazebo for the future decorations with music and material such as garland and wreaths for the holiday season. Kim doesn't decorate any higher than 30 feet; anything higher goes to Don. A wreath on the City Hall was also mentioned considering nothing like that has been done in the past. Pat Hutton and Claudia DeFrance have been calling Director Russo stating that something needs to be done and that time is running out.

A bid waiver will need to be put in place but with an emergency purchase like the Christmas lighting, a poll will be needed because of the amount of money it costs. It will be placed in all of the council member's mailboxes and it will be mentioned that the Christmas lighting was discussed at the Public Works meeting. After the 1 year emergency purchase, the lights can either go to bid or an agreement can be made with Christmas Décor.

The council created a ten thousand dollar line item and Tina Gomes will be able to draw a check for \$10,000.00. Christmas Décor wants half of the money up front so that the purchasing of the lights can be completed. Don was handed a check on Friday, October 11, 2013 and he will have the product here in 7-10 days. Director Russo stated that he would like the tree done at least two weeks before the lighting before it gets too cold and so that everyone can view it to make sure that it's what is expected. Donna Imme and Diana Doyle stated that we are supposed to give Christmas Décor half of the amount of money, which is \$12,500.00. Only \$10,000.00 can be appropriated because that is what is in the line item.

The old lights will be taken down with 80-100 foot lifts and 30-40 foot lifts that will possibly be donated by Mazzotta Rentals. The existing extension cords will be wire-tied for the new lights so that extra power does not have to be used. Motion was made to approve the Christmas lighting. Motion was seconded and approved.

Director Russo stated that Fowler Avenue is going to be milled and paved from Russell Street to Vale Street. Long Hill Road is also going to be paved from Brush Hill Road to the water tank. Asphalt will be extended to CL&P's driveway. Director Russo mentioned that a call has already been made to CL&P alerting them of the future construction. There is no use for the rest of the road coming out on to route 17. The future purchase of land is being looked into so that a cul-de-sac can be installed because it isn't a safe area and is also hard to keep up with.

Councilman Berch stated that the wind from a freak storm over on Country Club Road blew wind into the catch basins which caused them to clog all the way from Atkins Street to the Meriden city line. These leaves only added to the sand that was previously in the catch basins. This causes a puddle at the end of Atkins Street after any type of rain storms. Councilman Berch asked Director Russo to look into the issue.

Director Russo stated that leaf pick up will begin around November 1, 2013. Some trucks might be sent out on October 28, 2013 to get an early start. Bulk waste pick-ups will be suspended until the spring time to dedicate time for the leaf pick-up.

Director Russo stated that 4 new employees are starting out at the yard. He met with the Heavy Equipment Operators and the Superintendent of Streets and Sanitation to make sure that the new employees are being trained properly as far as safety and so that they know all of the snow plow routes for the winter time. There will be a total of 6 new employees at City Yard when everything is completed. The Superintendent of Parks position is in the works with Personnel Department because it needs to be in place to interview future employees and give promotions.

A little girl that is doing a Girl Scout art project through parks and recreation wants to put a metal daisy in Smith Park. This is going to be done as a Sandy Hook Memorial. It was discussed as to where the metal daisy can be located within the park. A suggestion was made that it can go in the corner by the pavilion rather than the island so that it is not in the way. Motion was made and approved for the Girl Scout project in Smith Park.

Once the merge with Public Works and Parks is created, there will be 3 superintendents. One will be in Public Works, one in Sanitation and one in Parks. A meeting will be held in the future to further discuss how operations after the merge will be managed. Staff meetings will consist on discussions involving both departments. Director Russo stated that he believes that it will be a smooth transition.

A commission for Palmer Field will be put together involving 5 council members. Soccer fields will be named after Frank Marchese and Steve Prout due to their long term involvement with youth soccer. Once a commission is put in place around December, this will be addressed.

Director Russo stated that the West Lake Drive trees are gone and that Channel 8 did some news coverage at the site of tree removal.

**OTHER-**

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.